




2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201-1708

February 24, 1998

MEMORANDUM

To: Administrators, Intermediate Care Facilities for the Mentally Retarded and Residential Treatment Facilities for Children and Adolescents

From: Jerry L. Paul, Director 
Division of Health Licensing

Subject: Provider-wide Partial Exception to the Requirements of Regulations 61-13 and 61-103 Regarding Verbal Orders for Medication and Treatment.

Regulation 61-13, Standards For Licensing Habilitation Centers For The Mentally Retarded, Section J(2)(a), requires that, "All physician's orders for medication and treatment shall be recorded in the client's record, signed and dated by the physician or the nurse receiving the orders. All orders (including verbal orders) shall be signed and dated by the prescribing physician or his designee within 48 hours." Regulation 61-103, Standards For Licensing Residential Treatment Facilities for Children and Adolescents, Section G(2), requires that, "All clinical records shall contain the orders for medication and treatment written in ink and signed and dated by the prescriber or his designee. All orders, including verbal orders, shall be properly recorded in the clinical record and dated and signed by the prescriber or designee within 48 hours."

In the interest of establishing reasonable standards which can be met by providers and yet do not compromise the health and welfare of residents cared for in intermediate care facilities for the mentally retarded and residential treatment facilities for children and adolescents licensed in South Carolina, it has been determined that an alternative standard will be considered as acceptable.

All intermediate care facilities for the mentally retarded and residential treatment facilities for children and adolescents will be required to meet the standards outlined in the respective licensing regulations, R61-13, Section J(2)(a), or R61-103, Section G(2), **OR, as an alternative:**

1. A committee, to include representation by a physician treating residents at the facility, a pharmacist, and a designated member of the nursing staff, shall identify and list categories of diagnostic or therapeutic verbal orders associated with any potential hazard to the resident that must be authenticated by the prescriber within a limited time-frame. Schedule II controlled substances must be included on the list. A copy of this list shall be maintained at each nurses' station.

2. The verbal orders designated by the committee as requiring authentication within a limited time-frame shall be countersigned and dated by the prescriber or designee within a time-frame defined in facility policy and procedures, but in no case more than two days after the order was given.

3. All other verbal orders must be countersigned and dated by the prescriber or his designee within 30 days.

This exception applies to any intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded or residential treatment facility for children and adolescents licensed by the Department. It relates solely to South Carolina licensing standards. Any adverse condition(s) that may be related to this exception may result in revocation of the exception by the Department. The standards in R61-13, J(2)(a) and R61-103, G(2), as applicable, or the provider-wide exception, will be enforced during inspections. All other standards in the applicable regulations, R61-13 or 61-103, shall apply unless specifically excepted.

If there are any questions, please contact Dennis Gibbs at 803-737-7370.

JLP/JML/gm

cc: Alice Truluck
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